

- Voice Commands: Should consistent terms for content categories be established? Should those terms be used as voice enabled commands? Should all systems offer voice enabled commands?
- Shortcuts: Should a consistent format for shortcuts be established? Should shortcuts be part of all systems? Should shortcuts be available in voice commands in addition to numerical entry?

➤ System Access Quality

This area relates to the performance of the telephone system. Existing systems vary widely in their access quality. Some systems are designed for peak period usage, reducing or eliminating busy signals. Other systems are designed for average usage and become overloaded in high demand periods. Some systems enable users to quickly obtain information, others take much longer. Should there be consistent targets for access quality?

➤ ADA Implementation

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) became effective in the early 1990s to provide equal rights and opportunities to disabled citizens in many areas, including employment, access to state and local government services, public transportation services, and telecommunications. While there are specific provisions in the ADA requiring equal access to 911 for the hearing impaired through special devices, called TTY or TDD, it is unclear if the ADA imposes similar requirements on 511-type services. While it is required for transit customer service centers to have TTY/TDD access, it is not common in the other types of traveler information phone systems to date, with only one non-transit centric phone system, TravInfo, having TTY/TDD access. Telecommunications Relay Services are available to the hearing impaired as a means to communicate with other people or services and this method could be used to access 511 services. Is consistent access via TTY/TDD needed?

➤ Initial Greeting

The initial greeting of each system could vary widely. Greetings could vary in length. Some could indicate their sponsoring organization; others could use the name of the program or the brand of the service. Should there be a reference to a national service in the greeting? Should there be a statement forwarding people to 911? Should there be limits on the greeting, such as time and content?

➤ Hours of System Operation

Hours of operation of existing phone services vary widely. Many, but not all, automated systems are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, information may only be updated during a more limited set of hours. Many transit information centers operate extended business day hours. Should there be consistency associated with hours of operation?

➤ Multi-lingual capabilities

In some phone systems, Spanish services are available. King County (WA) METRO utilizes AT&T interpreters to help people of all languages. In August 2000, President Clinton signed an Executive Order (13166) that was aimed at improving access to government services for people with limited English proficiency that may have some implications for 511 services. Should there be consistency associated with non-English services?

➤ Timestamp information

Some automated systems in operation today will indicate in the recorded message when the information was created, enabling the caller to determine how old the report is. Some systems provide a timestamp for all information available based upon when the last update of any item occurred. Other systems timestamp each specific recorded message (e.g. a particular route). Still many other systems do not use timestamping at all. Should there be any consistency related to timestamping information?

➤ 511 Branding

Roadside signing is one of the methods likely to be used to advertise and promote the availability of 511. At present, no standard practice exists for placing 511 on either fixed or dynamic signage. Should there be a consistent approach to roadside signing promoting 511?

➤ Geographic service areas

The FCC ruling leaves to implementers to determine issues such as calling areas. Should there be consistency as to how states/regions establish geographic areas for 511 services? Should service areas match how the FCC defines service areas for wireline and/or wireless carriers (which are both different)?

➤ Consistency of content above the baseline services

If content guidelines offer implementers the option of adding additional services, should there be consistency among similar content in different 511 services (e.g., tourism information)?

➤ Linkage to 911

This issue was of great interest during the Retreat. Should each 511 system have a direct connection to the appropriate 911 center(s) in the region? If desired, does this create impossible or complex technical and regulatory problems for 511 implementers? Or is it sufficient to have a message in the initial greeting to the effect, "if this is an emergency, please hang up and dial 911?" Is consistency required at all, or should the issue be left to individual implementers to decide?

It was recognized that it will be easier to reach agreement in some areas than in others to establish consistency guidelines.

Much of the discussion in this session focused on service delivery business models. This discussion is summarized in the Cost Issues section.

Cost/Cost Recovery

The Policy Committee concluded that if possible the baseline public service content cost the end-user no more than the cost of a local wireline or wireless call, with additional charges for premium or other additional local service options being acceptable. It was also recognized that the economics will determine if this approach is feasible.

The Working Group was directed to identify, investigate, and present the Policy Committee plausible business models and the appropriateness of their application to 511. These include both public and private sector models, such as (note, these models were subsequently identified as candidates by a subset of the Working Group the day after the Retreat):

- Fee-for-service – the public sector contracts with the private sector to provide services.
- Partnership – the public sector and private sector partner(s) enter into a partnership where investment and/or revenues are shared between parties.
- Advertising – the incremental cost of providing 511 services would be supported by advertising revenues
- Portal – 511 services are provided as a component of a much broader “Audio Portal” service that provides many other types of information via the telephone.
- Franchise (exclusive) – the public sector establishes performance requirements and conducts an open negotiation with potential service providers, selecting a provider to operate 511 service in a given region based upon the best “deal” in terms of maximum service offerings and best financial terms for the public sector.
- Franchise (non-exclusive) – the public sector establishes performance requirements and enables wireline and wireless carriers to provide 511 services to their customers as long as the service they offer meets the requirements.

Analysis of the models should include descriptions of public and private sector roles and expectations, the experience and expectation of the caller, the impact on content and consistency guidelines and a generalized financial model supporting the business model. It was recognized that the prognosis for financial sustainability should be a key evaluation factor in assessing alternative business models.

The Policy Committee concluded that a better understanding of cost elements and magnitudes is needed and therefore requested the Working Group to provide the Policy Committee with a summary of nominal cost centers and magnitudes for the proposed baseline content services (both highway and transit).

The Policy Committee also discussed the potential of testing innovative service delivery and cost recovery methods, but did not reach a definitive conclusion.

Institutional Leadership and Next Steps

It was agreed that the effort to build-out a national 511 traveler information system will succeed only if the public and private sectors work together and bring the unique skills of their respective areas of expertise to this effort. It was recognized that the establishment of this 511 Coalition is an accomplishment in itself as it provides the forum for continuing cooperation and coordination of the various parties. A strong desire to continue to involve non-traditional transportation partners in the coalition, including those from both the wireline and wireless phone providers, was also expressed.

The Policy Committee determined that at least two additional meetings/retreats will be needed to reach consensus on content and consistency guidelines and relevant cost/business model related issues.

The Policy Committee selected mid-to-late August as the next meeting date. The principal objectives of the meeting will be to:

- Review, refine, and if possible, approve draft content and consistency guidelines.
- Review and determine if any policy actions are needed in the areas of cost, cost recovery, and business models.
- Review and agree upon a near-term national 511 Communications, Outreach and Marketing Plan.

The Policy Committee would then meet again 4-6 months following the August meeting. Between meetings, outreach will occur and consensus will be sought on the guidelines and policy directions. The goal of this meeting is Policy Committee approval of:

- Content and consistency guidelines to be forwarded for adoption by the sponsoring organizations (AASHTO, APTA, ITS America) and other interested organizations.
- An Integrated 511 Communications and Marketing Plan.
- Reach general agreement upon the dimensions of a forward action plan that identifies the needed actions and assigns responsibilities to carry out final policy directions.

To support these efforts, there was a sense of the Policy Committee that further consumer research is needed, particularly to understand what user's expect from services that could become, from the perspective of the caller, national in scope. Specific consumer research should be conducted to determine stated preferences on issues related to content consistency and business models, and then practical user experience should confirm or refine the results.

On March 30-31, the Working Group began to carry out the directions of the Policy Committee. Four sub-groups have been formed to develop the material needed for the August retreat:

- Content (Chair: Tim Wolfe, Arizona DOT) – Draft Content Guidelines
- Consistency (Chair: Martin Knopp, Utah DOT) – Draft Consistency Guidelines
- Business Models and Costs (Chair: Todd Kell, Virginia DOT) – Summary paper on potential business models and cost elements
- Communications, Marketing and Outreach (Chair: Carol Zimmerman, Battelle) – Draft Marketing and Outreach Plan

The Working Group will meet at least once in advance of the August Retreat to refine the materials to be presented at the Retreat and to create a vision of what 511 could be with the draft guidelines in place.

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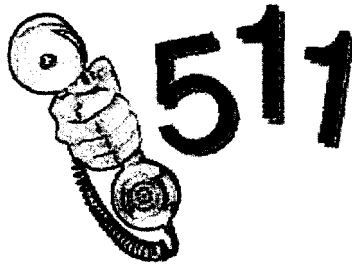
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

511 Policy Committee Retreat

March 29-30, 2001
Westin Innisbrook Resort
Palm Harbor, FL



Preparatory Materials



AMERICAN
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ASSOCIATION





American Association of
State Highway and
Transportation Officials

March 16, 2001

E. Dean Carlson, President
Secretary
Kansas Department
of Transportation

John Horsley
Executive Director

Dear 511 Policy Committee Member:

Subject: 511 Retreat – March 29-30 – Tampa, Florida

My warmest welcome and appreciation to you for attending this important retreat, which will establish foundation policies for 511 implementation.

In July 2000, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) designated 511 as an exclusive traveler information phone number. The FCC ruling leaves nearly all implementation issues to state and local agencies and telecommunication carriers. However, the FCC has challenged us to “work cooperatively to ensure that the transportation information provided with 511 is appropriate to the national scope of our designation and the scarcity of the N11 public resource.”

The intent of our one and one-half day retreat is to meet this challenge by establishing foundation policies on national content, national consistency, cost recovery and institutional leadership. The policy decisions we make will guide 511 implementation over the next few years.

To assist you in our dialogue, we have prepared the attached briefing document containing important information that will help prepare you for the discussions. Tabs 4-7 contain specific background information on national content, national consistency, cost recovery and institutional leadership. Please read these carefully.

I look forward to seeing you in Tampa, March 29-30. Should you have any question in the meantime, please contact Rick Schuman at 407-647-7275 ext. 142.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elwyn Tinklenberg".

Elwyn Tinklenberg
Commissioner

ET/JLW:kl
Enclosure

511 Deployment Coordination Program

Policy Retreat

March 29-30, 2001

Westin Innisbrook Resort

Palm Harbor, FL

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511 Deployment Coordination Program Policy Committee Retreat

Westin Innisbrook Resort
36750 U.S. Highway 19 North,
Palm Harbor, Florida 34884
Phone: (727) 942-2000

March 29-30, 2001

Preliminary Agenda

Thursday, March 29

- 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. **Welcome and Introductions**, Chairman Tinklenberg, Vice Chairman Yermack, Vice Chairman Cook
- 9:15 a.m. – 9:35 a.m. Why 511: U.S. DOT Perspective, Christine Johnson (I/D)
- 9:35 a.m. – 9:55 a.m. What do users want from 511?, Larry Yermack (I/D)
- 9:55 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. 511 Program Overview, Jim Wright (I/D)
- 10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. **“Content” Issues Overview (I)**
- 10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Break
- 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. **Facilitated Session on “Content” (D/A)**
- 12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. Lunch
- 1:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. **“Consistency” Issues Overview and Facilitated Session (I/D/A)**
- 3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Break
- 3:15 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. **“Cost” Issues Overview and Facilitated Session (I/D/A)**
- 4:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Summary/Wrap-up of day, Jim Wright
- 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Reception and Dinner (Speaker: Bob Denaro, Rand McNally – “The Impact of Innovation on 511”)

Friday, March 30

- 7:45 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **Future Roles, Responsibilities and Functions Issues Overview and Facilitated Session (I/D/A)**
- 10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Break
- 10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Summary, Consensus and Next Steps (D/A)**
- 11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Closing Observations from Organizing Sponsors, Chairman Tinklenberg, Vice Chairman Yermack, Vice Chairman Cook, Christine Johnson (I)
- 11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Retreat Adjourns

I = Information; D = Discussion; A = Action

Dress is Business Casual

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511 OVERVIEW

Background

On March 8, 1999, The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) petitioned the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to designate a nationwide three-digit telephone number for traveler information. This petition was formally supported by 17 State DOTs, 32 transit operators, and 23 Metropolitan Planning Organizations and local agencies. On July 21, 2000 the FCC designated 511 as the national traveler information number.

Key Points

- We asked for 511
- We got 511 with few strings attached
- State and local agencies responsible for implementation
- FCC encourages national use and consistency of service
- FCC will review our progress in 5 years

The FCC ruling leaves nearly all implementation issues and schedules to state and local agencies and telecommunications carriers. There are no Federal requirements and no mandated way to pay for 511; however, USDOT and FCC expect to see some type of nationwide deployment. In 2005, the FCC will review progress in implementing 511.

While the flexibility provided in the FCC ruling is highly desirable, it also presents a challenge. There is a great deal of interest in using 511 throughout the U.S. It is expected that there will be multiple requests for 511, at least in some parts of the U.S., from DOTs, transit agencies, regional and local transportation agencies, as well as private service providers who will offer to implement 511 services for some sort of compensation. If not thoughtfully planned, 511 services could devolve into an inconsistent set of services widely varying in type, quality and cost.

511 Deployment Coordination Program

Mindful of both the opportunity and challenge 511 presents, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), in conjunction with many other organizations including the American Public Transit Association (APTA) and the Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITS America), with support from the U.S. Department of Transportation, has established a 511 Deployment Coordination Program.

Key Points

- AASHTO led effort
- Many organizations involved, including APTA, ITS America and U.S. DOT
- Major issues of 511 service content, consistency and cost
- Policy Committee Retreat key for issue resolution and direction setting

The goal of the 511 Deployment Coordination Program is **“the timely establishment of a national 511 traveler information service that is sustainable and provides value to users.”** The intent is to implement 511 nationally using a bottom up approach facilitated by information sharing and a cooperative dialogue through the national associations

represented on the Policy Committee, the governing body of the program. The mission of the Policy Committee is to provide guidance on how to achieve this goal.

A Working Group of practitioners has been formed to support the Policy Committee. In advance of Policy Committee deliberations, the Working Group has identified three major issues that need to be addressed:

- **Content** -- Should there be some minimal level of content and quality of that content?
- **Consistency** -- To what extent should there be some level of consistency among 511 services throughout the U.S.?
- **Cost** -- Should 511 be free to the end user? If so, how should 511 be financed?

These issues will be the cornerstones of the March 29-30 Policy Committee Retreat. The Working Group is currently completing short papers on each of these issues to provide some background and analysis, and make some recommendations to provoke discussion within the Policy Committee. It is hoped that the Policy Committee can reach consensus on some implementation guidelines that you would champion within your respective agency, company or organization, and your association(s). Further, you will be asked to consider organizational roles, responsibilities and functions moving forward to support collective, coordinated action to achieve the directions established during the Retreat.

To support Policy Committee deliberations, the Working Group is also developing short background papers on certain subjects that relate to the issues to be resolved. Some of these papers will be provided at the March 1 briefing, others will be provided in advance of the March 29-30 retreat.